

บทความจากผลงานวิจัยเชิงสร้างสรรค์
Ancient Dance for Ancestors^{*}
(for Tenor, Bb Clarinet and Percussion)

บทเพลง การเต้นรำสำหรับบรรพบุรุษ
(สำหรับ นักร้องผู้ชายเสียงสูง คลาริเน็ต และเครื่องเคาะ)

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Abstract

This article is an analysis of a composition entitled “Ancient Dance for Ancestors” for Tenor, Clarinet and Percussion. Throughout the writing, the composer demonstrates how he applies inspiration and raw material through compositional techniques into the work. The result is a piece that represents different interpretations of dances from ancestor’s spirits.

Keywords: 1. New Music Composition 2. Ancient Dance 3. New Music Ensemble

^{*} This composition was written to feature the cross culture between Lanna and the Western culture.

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บทคัดย่อ

บทความจากผลงานวิจัยเชิงสร้างสรรค์บทนี้นำเสนอผลงานการประพันธ์บทเพลงชื่อ “Ancient Dance for Ancestors for Tenor, Clarinet and Percussion” ผู้เขียนได้บรรยายถึงการผสมผสาน ระหว่าง การฟ้อนผีมดของวัฒนธรรมล้านนา และเทคนิคการประพันธ์บทเพลงตะวันตก โดยผู้เขียนได้ ถ่ายทอด แรง บันดาลใจ จากพิธีฟ้อนผีมด ผ่านเทคนิคการบรรเลงของนักร้องและเครื่องดนตรีตะวันตก วิธีการและเทคนิคการ ประพันธ์บทเพลง ให้ได้มาซึ่งบทเพลงคลาสสิกจากวัฒนธรรมตะวันตกที่มีความเป็น วัฒนธรรมล้านนาผสมผสาน อย่างลงตัว

คำสำคัญ: 1. บทเพลงร่วมสมัย 2. การเต้นรำแบบโบราณ 3. วงดนตรีร่วมสมัย

Introduction, Inspiration, Concept and Aesthetics Philosophy:

We might ask ourselves whether Mozart’s music deserves all the credit it receives? If it does, why didn’t Beethoven or Brahms compose in Mozart’s style? The answer might be that Beethoven and Brahms would like to have their own voice.

Most 21st century composers, likewise, create new music in such a way that, hopefully, people would recognize the style of their compositions, their individual identity. To do so, they are constantly looking for new sounds, materials, ideas, aesthetic philosophies, inspirations, and so forth. The composers then embedded, applied, re-processed, and in somehow and somehow use “it” in their music.

Using “non western elements in western music” is another option many felt is one of the most important resources waiting to be explored. At a certain moment in the study of composition by most young composers, (studying and learning the exercises and copying of what had been done by previous composers), it is time for them to break new grounds and find their own voice to have their expression spoken through their own music.

Thai composers such as myself, feel strongly about composing the music to be our own signatures. To do so, number of composers, myself included, were inspired by our own culture and heritage. The place we grow up. We absorbed the energy and the way of life in ourselves. In daily life we known, it is there without we having to force, pretend or looking for it. These are wonderful raw material for arts and music. It is only there waiting to inspire us. The composition was commissioned by Asian Young Musicians’ Connections. The work was premiered at the Asian Young Musicians’ Connections International Music Festival, San Bernardino in the city of California, USA in 2011.

Objective/Scope of Study: to compose a piece for Tenor, Bb Clarinet and Percussion Instrument) that drawn inspirations from Lanna heritage.

The composition was inspired by the Northern of Thailand's ceremony called Forn Pee Mod. The composer draws the following raw materials from the ceremony through the compositional techniques.

There are:

1. Northern Thai Greetings
2. Pi Joom (ปี่จ่อม) - a Northern Thai's flute.
3. Forn Pee Mod (ฟ้อนผีมด) - Pee Mod Dances.

Methodology: In this article, the writer (composer) will explain how he used these inspirations from the (Lanna) Northern of Thailand's ceremony in this composition.

The work was inspired by "Fon Pee- ghost dance" (dance of our ancestors). It is an event from the ancient Lanna (Northern Thailand) period. Lanna means million rice fields. ¹Lanna people received "Fon Pee Mod" influent from Mon-a tribe from Burma. On the ghost dance day, living people let the ghosts of their ancestors possess their bodies to dance and give them blessing and protection throughout the year. Number of ghosts came out dressing in colorful outfit and with strange dance in various speeds.

In the West, people greet each other by saying "Hello or Hi or How are you?" And in different parts of the world also have their own way of greeting each other. In the North of Thailand, however, we greet each other by saying the following:

- a. Pai Thang Dai Ma? (ไปทางใดมา?) which means where are you coming from?
- b. Gin Kao Leaw Ga? (กินข้าวแล้วกา?) which means Have you eaten yet?
- c. Yah Ayang Gin Ga? (ยะ อะหยัง กิน กา?) which means what are you cooking?

Festinated by the pronunciation of the text: their sound and the changing of the tones when spoken, the composer used these phrases as the lyrics for the composition "Ancient Dance". At the opening of the work, these texts served as the greetings of the gathering people. The tenor sings as the livings and ghosts greet for one another, see example 1.



Example 1. The Tenor sings greeting from the North:
pai thang dai ma? (where are you coming from?)

The opening was followed by the complete text of the work, where the local climax is reached and started the solo clarinet representing pi joom accompanied by percussion instruments, see example 2.

The image shows a musical score for two parts: Tenor (T) and Timpani/Percussion (Timp/Per). The Tenor part has lyrics: "er pai thang dai ma pai thang dai ma pai thang dai ma pai thang dai ma nya a ngung gin ga gin kow liaw ga". The Timpani/Percussion part includes notes for "Tum-Tum" and "Bass Drum". Dynamic markings include *mf*, *p*, *f*, and *mf*.

Example 2. Tenor sings the three greetings and slowly moves upward to a local climax for the entrance of solo clarinet, which accompanied by percussion instruments

Music is an important part for the cultures and the dances. Although, in the pee-mod dance itself does not use pi joom flute in the dance, pi joom is one of an important musical instrument of the North. It has a distinctive sound. The sound produced by a single-reed instrument, which requires the player to cover the whole head joint of the instrument into his or her mouth, see example 3.



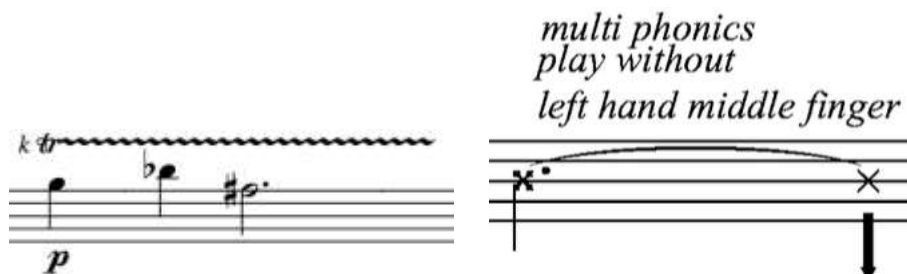
Example 3. Master Thib (ป้ออัยต๊ับ) playing pi joom, credit: Surakarn Samkaew

The composer was so inspired by the beautiful authentic sound of the flute that he composed the clarinet passages in style of pi-joom. He had the clarinetist produced the out-of-tune sonority (from Western tuning) to represent the ancient sound. As the composer wrote on the performance note: All passages that mark + The player needs to play the notes without pressing the ring finger of the right hand at all time. The result is an out-of-tune sound similar to those of pi-joom. See example 4 for the out-of-tune clarinet passages.



Example 4. Clarinet passage to be playing with out-of-tune sonority by pressing extra fingering to represent the ancient sound of pi joom flute.

In the additional of extra fingering, the composer also have the clarinetist playing key trills, portamento and multi-phonics to reinforce the North of Thailand's ancient sound.



Example 5a. Key trill

Example 5b. multi phonics



Example 5c. Portamento and Key trill

The composer created ancient sonorities by having the clarinet playing extended techniques: Example 5a. Key trill-alternate between two tone colors of the same pitch, Example 5b. Multi phonics-playing multiple pitches at the same time, Example 5c. Portamento and Key trill-slide ascending pitches and end with the Key trill

Pee Mod dance (Fon Pee Mod) costume is very unique and colorful from head to toes. The costumes are from the culture of Mon people, the ancestor of Myanmar. Their dresses are colorful shirt with long sleeves, long colorful skirt or salong with colorful head ban. In addition to the costume, the people also wear flowers necklace, colorful scarf, and bractless. See example 6. The composer expressed this inspiration through the music by using extended techniques of each musical part: Tenor sings while flutter tonguing and sliding technique; Clarinet is playing with key trills; and Percussionist plays an upside down suspension cymbal on a sliding timpani. See example 7.



Example 6. Fon Pi Mod - Colorful costumes. From Yimwhan.com

A musical score for three parts: Tenor (T), B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), and Timpani/Percussion (Tim/Per). The Tenor part features a melody with a flutter tongue effect, marked with *mf* and *fp*. The B♭ Clarinet part includes a key trill, marked with *mp* and *p*. The Timpani/Percussion part shows a sliding technique, marked with *mp* and *pp*. The score is written on three staves, with the Tenor staff in treble clef, the B♭ Clarinet staff in treble clef, and the Timpani/Percussion staff in bass clef. The music is in 4/4 time and G major.

Example 7. The use of extended techniques to create colorful sound to archive colorful effect of the costumes

Pee Mod dance also have different speeds. On the ceremony day, living people gather together to prepare for the important day. After the leader started dancing, one by one the rest of the dancers started to dance in various speeds. See example 8. In the composition, the composer composed the middle section toward the end of the piece by using multiple tempi to represent the different speeds of Pee Mod dance. He asked the singer and the clarinet player to play at a quarter note equal 65 while the percussionist played bongos at the speed of quarter note equal 100. See example 9a. In the contrary, the next section, the composer wrote the passage that show the percussionist played bongos and tom-toms at a fast speed and keep going in circular motion as if the composer wanted to paint the picture of a faster speed dancer danced around in a circle on his or her own paste while the others were dancing in a slower speed, although this time the tenor and the clarinet player were playing at a quarter note equal 85. All people were dancing for their ancestors in their own pastes and their own ways but share the love for the same love ones who had passed. See example 9b.



Example 8. People dance “Fon Pee Mod” in different speeds at the same time.

Picture from Thainews.prd.go.th

Example 9a. Tenor and Clarinetist played at quarter note equal 65 while the percussionist played bongos at the speeds of 100 to show the different speeds of the Pee Mod dance.

Example 9b. Percussionist played bongos and tom-toms at quarter note equal 100 in circular motion to represent a faster dancer danced in a circle around the slower dancers, which were represented by the tenor and the clarinetist in a slower speed at a quarter note equal 85.

Result: A score of the music composition “Ancient Dance for Ancestors for Tenor, Bb Clarinet, and Percussion Instrument.”

Conclusion: Ancient Dance for Ancestors was a piece for Tenor, Bb Clarinet and Percussion Instruments, that has several inspirations which the composer has drawn from the Lanna’s traditional ceremony. It is a ceremony for the living people and their passed ancestors to celebrate together by the formal let their bodies processed by the spirits of their loved ones. It started with several inspirations which the composer drawn from the Fon Pee Mod ceremony: Greetings, Pi Joom and Pee Mod dance’s speeds. The composer then transferred to raw materials. Compositional techniques are the vehicle to realize the inner sound of his imagination to the sound of the ensemble. When the work was completed, the composition was well received from the audience at its world premiere and other performances.

World Premiere

The Asian Young Musicians' Connections International Music Festival, San Bernardino in the city of California, USA in 2011. By Andrew Crane: Tenor and Duplum Duo.

Thailand Premiere

Thailand Composition Festival 2014: Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand by Festival artists.

China Premiere

China-ASEAN Music Week 2016, Nanning, China by Xiong Lei: Tenor and New Music Coop's Combo ensemble, Turkey

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